

Message Text

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51

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-03 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03

SS-20 OMB-01 PRS-01 EB-11 DRC-01 /120 W

----- 064560

O R 011159Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5577

JCS WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

SECDEF WASHDC

CNO WASHDC

CINCPACFLT MAKALAPA

COMMAC SCOTT AFB

COMUSMACTHAI BANGKOK

COMSEVENTHFLT

CTF 72

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

S E C R E T BANGKOK 12484

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, MILI, MOPS, TH, XO, US

SUBJECT: US INDIAN OCEAN ACTIVITIES FROM THAILAND

REF: A) BANGKOK 12193 (NOTAL)

B) JCS 292244Z JUL 74

C) STATE 164034

1. WITH REFERENCE TO PUBLIC AFFAIRS GUIDANCE PARA 4, REF B,
EMBASSY BANGKOK ALSO REQUESTS IMMEDIATE NOTIFICATION OF ANY
PRESS OR PUBLIC QUERIES REGARDING US FLIGHTS BETWEEN THAILAND
AND INDIAN OCEAN DESTINATIONS.

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2. SINCE "NO COMMENT" REPLY MIGHT BE CONSTRUED BY NEWSMEN AS TACIT CONFIRMATION THAT US HAD DISREGARDED PUBLICIZED THAI REQUEST TO END P-3 INDIAN OCEAN MARITIME PATROL FLIGHTS FROM UTAPAO, WE SUGGEST THAT THE STANDARD REPLY BE "NO US AIRCRAFT HAVE CONDUCTED PATROL FLIGHTS OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN FROM BASES IN THAILAND SINCE JULY 12, THE DATE THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT REQUESTED SUSPENSION OF THIS ACTIVITY." ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS SHOULD BE TURNED ASIDE, PLEADING LACK OF INFORMATION OR IRRELEVANCE (SEE PARA 6 BELOW).

3. THE THAI FOREIGN MINISTER ON JULY 26 SAID THAT IF HE WAS ASKED DIRECTLY ABOUT US SUPPORT FLIGHTS OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN, HE WOULD HAVE TO GIVE A TRUTHFUL RESPONSE. HE HAS PROVEN HIMSELF VERY ADEPT AT HANDLING DIFFICULT QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS ON MANY OCCASIONS IN RECENT MONTHS, BUT WE CANNOT PREDICT EXACTLY HOW SUCH AN ENCOUNTER WOULD WORK OUT.

4. IF THE OCCASION ARISES FOR ANY REFERENCE TO SUPPORT FLIGHTS TO THE INDIAN OCEAN, THEY SHOULD BE CALLED "FOOD AND MATERIEL" FLIGHTS TO CONFORM WITH THE SPECIFIC REQUEST FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTER (REF A), WHERE HE CITED RTG SENSITIVITY TO MENTION OF "LOGISTICS" BECAUSE OF ITS MILITARY IMPLICATIONS. WE URGE THAT THIS NEW NOMENCLATURE BE APPLIED TO ANY SUCH FLIGHTS TRANSITING THAILAND FOR THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF INDICATING OUR COMPLIANCE WITH RTG REQUEST.

5. EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE BY RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES CONCERNED WITH RESUMED "FOOD AND MATERIEL" FLIGHTS TRANSITING UTAPAO TO AVOID ATTRACTING UNNECESSARY ATTENTION THROUGH POSTING SCHEDULES ON BULLETIN BOARDS, ANNOUNCING DESTINATIONS, OR OTHERWISE ADVERTISING FLIGHT DESTINATIONS. WE SUGGEST ALL MESSAGES REGARDING SUCH FLIGHTS CARRY SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF AT LEAST CONFIDENTIAL. AT THE SAME TIME, ALL APPROPRIATE ICAO INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT PROCEDURES AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS SHOULD BE FULLY COMPLIED WITH.

6. IN THE EVENT THAT THE RTG RELEASES INFORMATION ABOUT OUR CONTINUING "FOOD AND MATERIEL" FLIGHTS INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES MAKE RESPONSE TO QUERIES UNAVOIDABLE, WE HAVE PREPARED THE FOLLOWING CONTINGENCY Q'S AND -S:

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Q: CAN YOU CONFIRM THAT P-3'S HAVE RESUMED FLIGHTS OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN?

A: THERE ARE CURRENTLY NO RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN FROM THAILAND.

Q: ARE P-3'S MAKING ANY KIND OF FLIGHTS, OTHER THAN

RECONNAISSANCE, FROM UTAPAO TO DIEGO GARCIA?

A: FOOD AND MATERIEL FLIGHTS REGULARLY ORIGINATE AT CLARK AIR BASE IN THE PHILIPPINES, REFUEL AT UTAPAO, AND SOMETIMES TAKE ON ADDITIONAL FOOD AND MATERIEL BEFORE CONTINUING TO DIEGO GARCIA. THESE FLIGHTS ARE USUALLY ACCOMPALISHED BY SCHEDULED MILITARY AIRLIFT COMMAND TRANSPORT AIRCRAFTS, SUCH AS THE C-141. HOWEVER, SOME FEW P-3S ALSO MAKE THESE FOOD AND MATERIEL FLIGHTS. WE WANT TO EMPHASIZE, HOWEVER, THAT NO RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS ARE TAKING PLACE OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN FROM THAILAND.

Q: HAS THE RTG BEEN INFORMED OF THESE FOOD AND MATERIEL FLIGHTS AND, IF SO, DID THEY APPROVE THEM?

A: WE HAVE REPEATEDLY SAID THAT IT IS US POLICY TO CONSULT AND COORDINATE WITH THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT ON US MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN THAILAND.

Q: IS THE US GOVERNMENT ASKING THE THAI GOVERNMENT TO RECONSIDER THE SUSPENSION OF P-3 RECONNAISSANCE OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN?

A: AS WE HAVE SAID MANY TIMES, THERE IS AN ON-GOING DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE US GOVERNMENT AND THE THAI GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE KINDS AND LEVELS OF US MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN THAILAND.
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